



Photos by Marlene Thompson

(Above) The Georgia National Guard 278th Military Police Company guidon bearer renders honors as the unit is reviewed during a departure ceremony in Gymn #3 at Fort Gordon Jan. 9. (Below) A toddler shares a moment riding on her father's shoulders in the moments before her father departs for a 12-month deployment.



(Below) Soldiers of the Georgia National Guard 278th Military Police company sound off with a hearty "hooah" expressing their outlook as they complete the departure ceremony before they leave Fort Gordon on the workup for deployment later in the year. The departure ceremony was held Jan. 9 in Gym 3.

278th Military Police deploys

Charmain Z. Brackett
Correspondent

A show of hands revealed that more than half of those with the 278th Military Police Co. of the Georgia National Guard volunteered to be part of the group which held its departure ceremony Wednesday, Jan. 9 at Fort Gordon's Gym 3.

The new company performed its first drill together in December 2005; now, its 133-member squad is headed to Fort Dix, N.J. then on to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"This is an important mission you are going on," said Maj. Gen. William Nesbitt, Georgia's adjutant general. "Remember who you are representing. You represent your Families; you represent the Army and you represent the citizens of the United States. Your conduct should be according to that."

The unit was activated on Sept. 14, 2007 and received mobilization orders on Oct. 12, 2007.

"The leaders of this company will do everything possible to ensure all 133 Soldiers come back next year."

1st Lt. Abraham Stone
278th Military Police Company Commander

"You are well-trained and well-led and ready to represent us," said Brig. Gen. Maria Britt, Georgia Army National Guard commanding general.

Among the tasks of the unit while in Iraq will be to guard detainees.

"This is a serious mission," Britt said. "It's a tough duty."

She charged them to "take your values with you. Don't compromise. Take the high road. It will serve you right."

Many of the leaders addressed the Family members in attendance and told them to

make sure they contact Family Readiness Group leaders or other staff staying behind if they had any problems.

"Families don't suffer in silence," said Britt. "Let us help you."

The 278th will spend about a year in Iraq.

"The leaders of this company will do everything possible to ensure all 133 Soldiers come back next year," said 1st Lt. Abraham Stone, company commander.



(Left) Family members proudly look up to a Soldier of the Georgia National Guard 278th Military Police as he answers questions from one of the television news reporter present at the departure ceremony for the MP's. (Below) Brig. Gen. Maria Britt, Georgia Army National Guard commanding general and Brig. Gen. Larry Dudley, Georgia ANG Director of the Joint Staff pray with others gathered at the departure ceremony.

